

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

*Celebrating*  
**40** *Years*  
of Serving the Community



We inspire people so that they believe they can

**inCommunity**  
innovate. inspire. independent.





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### Acknowledgements

inCommunity acknowledges Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Country on which we walk, work and live. We recognise their connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them, their cultures and to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

inCommunity also acknowledges the support of the Queensland Government, Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy, through the SHS, CAP and Skillsets for Successful Tenancies - Dollars and Sense programs.



**Department of Communities,  
Housing and Digital Economy**

**W**elcome to the Annual Report for 2022.

2022 has once again been highlighted by many achievements and catch your breath moments with each one of these milestones building on the other illustrating what an amazing team we have.

#### Board and Leadership:

- Re- Structure of Organisation
- Acquisition of Beddown
- Majority completion of Strategic planning elements
- Instigation of Reconciliation Action Plan Sub- Committee
- Review and Approval of Board Charter
- Engagement of consultant for external review of Policy and Procedure framework

To Paul Tommasini, Nerissa Wade, Mark Davidson and more recently Norm McGillivray, a big thank you for your commitment and skills that contribute to the leadership and culture of our organisation.

To my fellow Board members, your offerings in strategic direction and timely decision making are crucial to an organisation . We have a very collaborative board who are very giving of their time and skill sets .

During the year the Board has said goodbye to David Melloy ( Marketing chair ) and welcomed Cameron Goffage and Tammy Stanton .

While reflecting on endeavours undertaken by the Board in 2022, I was prompted to look towards initiatives for the coming year .

- Investigate mechanisms for a Company Limited by Guarantee structure
- Strategic development of Beddown sites

- Develop a new Strategic plan incorporating growth elements
- Investigate key partnerships
- Investigate possible purchase of Corporate site

While we as a Board mainly focus on present and future possibilities for the organisation it is also important to remember what has gone before .

In this vain we are delighted to acknowledge the following achievements .

Celebrate ! Celebrate !

#### **IIYS / inCommunity Inc. (combined 40 years of service )**

This year inCommunity Inc. is commemorating 40 years of service to the Ipswich area through delivery of Crisis Care Accommodation, Mobile Support, Outreach teams, Spin Share Housing and The Club.

At the core of these services is our WHY :

“Inspire people so that they believe they can”

Our teams who gave/give time and commitment to support their community are to be commended . Achieving 40 years of continuous service in the Crisis / Homelessness Sector is outstanding and can only be achieved with a high level of leadership , culture , understanding and collaboration across the organisation .

#### **What's on the horizon for inCommunity Inc. over the next 40 years?**

We will continue to build on the platform laid by our predecessors by identifying needs/ gaps in the crisis care homelessness space and morph the organisation to respond to those needs and continue to supply quality services .

We as an organisation are up to the challenge!



**Lynn Mount**  
Chairperson

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Inspire people so  
that they believe  
they can

#### **Paul Tommasini - 20 years of Service .**

What can you say about someone who brings so much to the organisation , I will leave it to the team who were asked to describe Paul in a word :

Insightful , Dedicated, Inspirational, Trailblazing, Compassionate, Collaborative.

These words underpin the reason for the longevity of the staff , their engagement with our values and the establishment of the culture we enjoy .

Paul I wish to express the collective thanks of the Board , the team , stakeholders and the community you serve .

In closing, I encourage you to read the Annual Report to gain insight from a whole of organisation lens .

I look forward to working with the team in 2023.

Warm Regards,

*L. K. Mount*

**Lynn Mount**  
Chairperson

# Where were you in 1982?

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



**Paul Tommasini**  
Chief Executive Officer

For me, I was watching the Commonwealth Games as a very young child, with no idea of anything in the real world – about all I remember is a giant kangaroo going around the stadium, and having the soft toy version of it. There was much more than that happening in 1982 though, and in Ipswich, Queensland there was a group of community minded people that got together on the 25th of November to formally establish a service to respond to the needs of young people on the streets of Ipswich. That was the birth of Ipswich Independent Youth Service Inc. And 40 years later, we are still here, with

our head quarters only a few hundred meters from where it all started! It is bitter sweet to be able to say that we are now 40 years old – on the one hand we have survived the test of time, and are thriving. On the other, its 40 years and the problem we were established to solve is probably the worst it has ever been.

Included in our Annual Report this year is the inaugural Annual Report from the AGM in 1983, just 7 months into our journey. Have a read of it as there is some really interesting insights, including the income for the financial year (which is almost the same as our daily spend today). Something else that caught my eye is that whilst the wages were so little back then, the cost of an electric jug doesn't really seem to have changed much!

My journey with the organisation started in 2002 when we were turning 20. I was excited to be part of an organisation that was making such an impact on the lives of young people of our region. I was only intending to stay for a short while, but there is something about this place that keeps us hooked – it is our WHY. 40 years later and this hasn't really changed much, we have just defined it better – “We inspire people so that they believe they can”

A lot has happened over the last 40 years, and particularly the last 20 since I started. Today, we are no longer the small organisation that ‘helps the kids of Ipswich’. Now we are an organisation with a growing reach across the nation. We are an incubator for innovation, and a powerhouse of awesome staff who

are 100% dedicated to our WHY and the people we are here to serve. We are intentionally ‘SMALL BIG’, which is the way I would describe us. SMALL BIG is the best of both worlds, we are growing the reach of a much larger organisation, while keeping the small team, or family feel.

Over the last 40 years we have achieved some amazing things as an organisation, and walked alongside thousands of people while they changed their lives. This year is no different, we have provided a service to a total of 5,171 people. We have continued to expand our geographical reach through the Tenancy Skills Institute. We consolidated our organisation through a restructure and discontinuing the delivery of the Local Level Alliance and Bail Support programs. This allowed us to focus on our core business of housing and homelessness.

In May, our family got a little bigger with the acquisition of Beddown Limited. Beddown provides a health and wellbeing response to rough sleepers by providing them with a temporary safe place to sleep and access services by repurposing underutilised buildings.

The following reports paint the picture of the year that was. I would like to thank everyone who was involved in making inCommunity the success it was in the 2022 financial year. I am looking forward to the coming year and the further realisation of many of our goals.



**PAUL TOMMASINI** - Chief Executive Officer



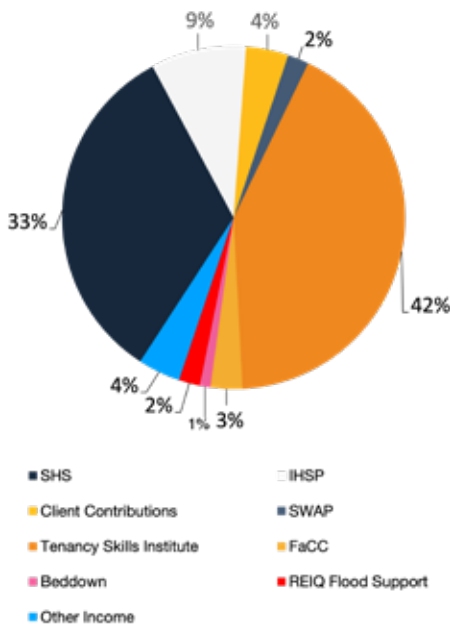
## TREASURER'S REPORT

### 2021-22 Financial Year



**Cameron Goffage** -Treasurer

#### Income by Program



I am pleased to present audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2022 for inCommunity Inc.

Total income during this financial year increased by 5% (to \$3,349,539), offset by total expenses which increased by 8% (to \$3,293,524), resulting in a net surplus of \$56,015.

This continued strong financial performance is a credit to inCommunity despite the challenges of the COVID pandemic.

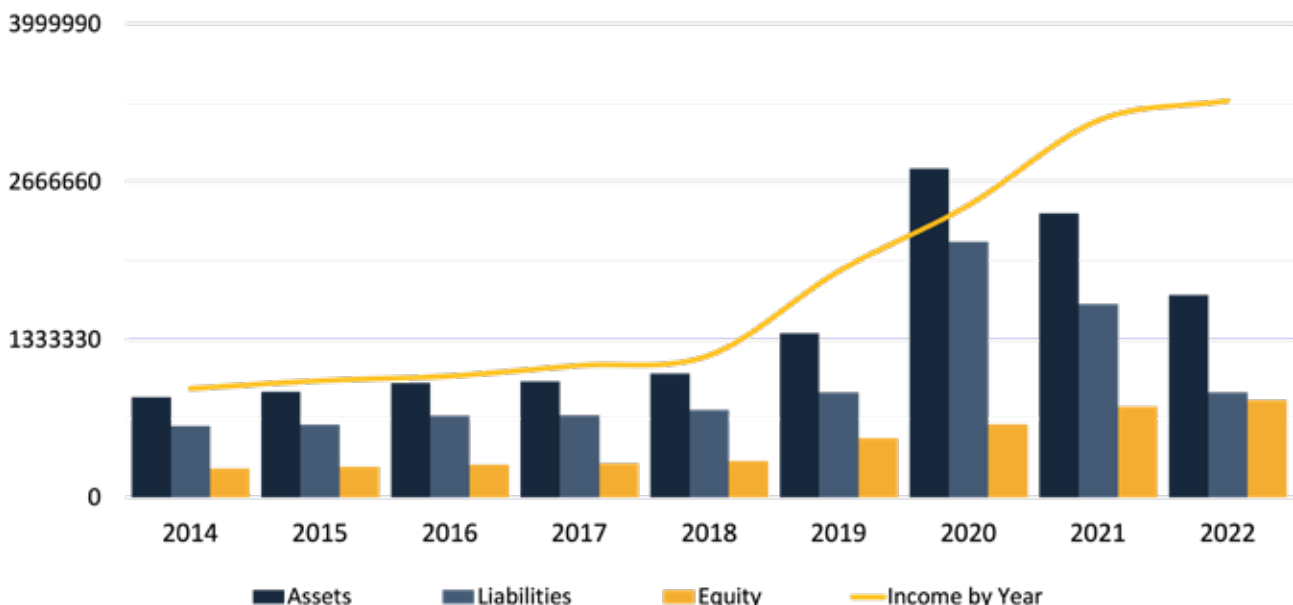
As stated in the independent audit report inCommunity is financially viable and is compliant with applicable Australian Accounting Standards.

**inCommunity receives core funding from the Queensland Government's Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy. In addition, fee for service arrangements were in place with our partner organisations, Kummara Association and Inspire Youth and Family Services, for the delivery of the Local Level Alliance and Bail Support Programs.**

inCommunity's Financial Subcommittee and the Board have continually reviewed its' finances at all Board meetings throughout this financial year. Changes to ongoing reporting to ensure more oversight has been undertaken.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our financial supporters, members and staff for their ongoing support, commitment and dedication to inCommunity.

#### Assets, Liabilities & Equity



**Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income**

For the year ended 30 June 2022

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Grants	3,155,979	3,027,858
Government subsidies	-	50,000
Donations and contributions	79,653	40
Interest received	280	632
Fees and charges	64	538
Rental income	109,561	103,759
Sundry income	4,002	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>3,349,539</b>	<b>3,182,827</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Advertising	53,445	37,565
Amortisation expense	110,847	107,164
Audit fees	8,400	9,641
Admin and bookkeeping expenses	7,040	14,516
Cleaning	8,995	10,007
Computer software and maintenance	63,274	25,396
Consultancy	6,707	4,204
Depreciation	78,200	72,140
Electricity and gas	11,944	12,505
Food and provisions	60,069	73,508
Fringe benefits tax	8,450	4,315
Insurance	49,094	43,180
Interest expense	5,714	8,607
Learning management system service	28,233	26,531
Management and membership fees	6,672	746
Meeting expenses	7,266	2,634
Motor vehicle expenses	40,130	33,691
Printing, postage and stationary	9,952	10,125
Rates	30,451	21,617
Rent	26,196	37,518
Repairs and maintenance	17,900	29,411
Security	2,932	2,936
Staff training, development and recruitment	24,748	38,238
Sundry expenses	12,445	4,668
Superannuation	205,220	183,045
Telephone	30,880	14,088
Travel expense	140,752	56,169
Wages and salaries	2,192,659	2,102,636
Workers compensation	44,909	44,460
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>3,293,524</b>	<b>3,031,261</b>
Net surplus/(deficit)	<b>56,015</b>	<b>151,566</b>
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AFTER INCOME TAX</b>	<b>56,015</b>	<b>151,566</b>
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	-	-
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>56,015</b>	<b>151,566</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**inCommunity Inc.**

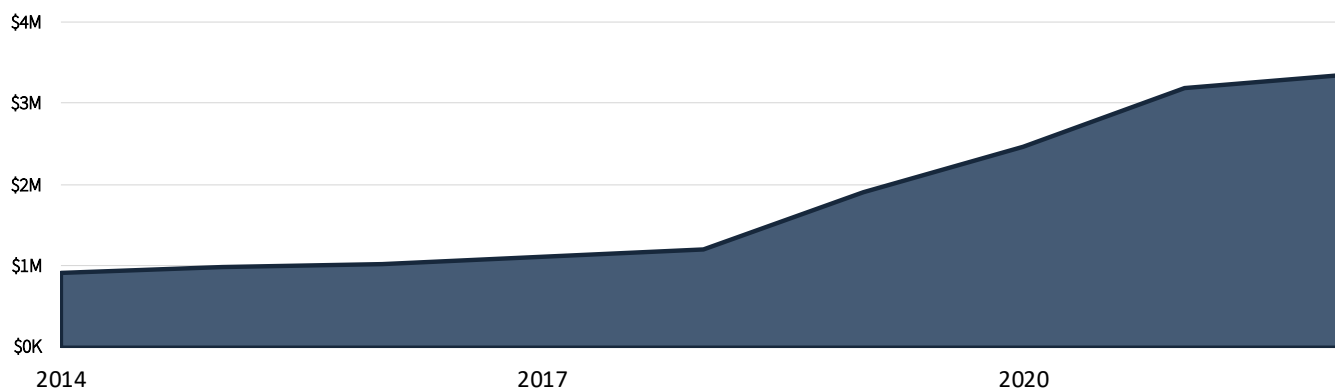
ABN 65 653 625 605

**Statement of Financial Position**

As at 30 June 2022

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,304,180	1,894,529
Other assets	24,410	2,768
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>1,328,590</b>	<b>1,897,297</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Other assets	23,544	25,544
Property, plant and equipment	278,231	298,275
Right-of-use assets	80,020	177,688
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>381,795</b>	<b>501,507</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,710,385</b>	<b>2,398,804</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and other payables	589,015	1,188,938
Provisions	212,204	246,597
Lease liabilities	82,641	103,007
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>883,860</b>	<b>1,538,542</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Provisions	2,777	14,554
Lease liabilities	-	77,975
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>92,529</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>886,637</b>	<b>1,631,071</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>823,748</b>	<b>767,733</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Accumulated funds	823,748	767,733
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>823,748</b>	<b>767,733</b>

Income by Year



# Visit Our New Website

[www.tenancyskills.com.au](http://www.tenancyskills.com.au)



## MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

2022 has been a busy and successful year from a marketing and communications perspective.

Working from a robust plan established in 2021, the Marketing Sub-Committee contributed time and effort to support the deployment of effective marketing, communications, and advertising activities.

The strategic acquisition of Beddown required considerable brand and service integration efforts, as did the launch of an attractive new website for the now national Tenancy Skills Institute. Additional changes were made to the existing InCommunity website to clarify the organisation's market position and various service offerings.

With the generous support of Google Ads Grants, more people are able to find out about and access our services. We have also been approved for Microsoft Ads for Social Impact, meaning more people will visit our websites through Bing, Yahoo, MSN and Microsoft Edge advertising.

A further brand exploration process is currently underway to ensure the long-term alignment of all brands under the InCommunity Inc head brand.

Important business development events

were held and attended along the Eastern seaboard throughout 2022, to promote the Tenancy Skills Institute services. Events held on-site at the InCommunity Women's Club have proven very popular, with exceptional feedback and social media engagement being received from participants.

We would like to thank Dignity and Youfoodz for their continued and valuable partnership with us, to provide food relief for local people in need of healthy sustenance. This service has become extremely popular and is something that participants not only rely on, but also look forward to.

We would like to sincerely thank David Melloy for his dedicated service to the Sub-Committee and Board this year. We would also like to make special mention of Karen Furnivall, Marketing and Communications Manager, who consistently goes above and beyond to ensure that critical promotional activities and events are planned and executed well.

Members: Dr Dan Jess (Chair), Paul Tommasini, Karen Furnivall, Nerissa Wade, Lisa Farely, and David Melloy (part-year).





# BE BRAVE. MAKE CHANGE.

**NATIONAL  
RECONCILIATION  
WEEK 2022**

**27 MAY – 3 JUNE**  
**#NRW2022**

**NRW.RECONCILIATION.ORG.AU**



## Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Update

inCommunity Inc commenced our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan earlier this year and during this time we created a Sub-Committee. We have met regularly to ensure that our Reconciliation Action Plan is not only meaningful and purposeful, but that it aligns with the core work we deliver to provide housing and homelessness assistance to vulnerable clients through our Connect Team, Beddown and the delivery of Tenancy Skills Institute training.

Our service is located in Ipswich, which is known in traditional Jagara language as Tulumur. We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional owners of the Jagara tribe of Tulumur.

We also respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples who are the Traditional Owners of Melbourne, also known by local First Nations peoples as Naarm, where we deliver Tenancy Skills Institute training.

Finally, we acknowledge the traditional owners of Cairns, known as Gimuy by the The Gimuy-Walubarra Yidi people. We pay respects to our First Nations people and recognise their deep connection to land, waters and communities for over 65,000 years continuous. We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

While working through our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, our Sub-Committee have endeavoured to outline and ensure that we formalise a deep commitment to our Reconciliation Action Plan that is very tangible.

This year I had the opportunity to attend the 2022 National Reconciliation Action Plan Conference from June 7th – 9th, which was held in Sydney on traditional Gadigal Country. It was a two day workshop that was extremely informative. This year's Reconciliation Australia theme is "Brave Together" which is such an integral aspect of the commitment to walking together in true reconciliation.

**Chrissy Dodd** RAP Sub Committee Co-Chair

# BACK TO WHERE IT BEGAN

On 25 November 1982, a group of community minded people came together to establish a service to address the needs of young people living on the streets of Ipswich. This was the beginning of Ipswich Independent Youth Service. Over the next 40 years, we evolved and now as inCommunity Inc we also support adults and families impacted by homelessness in the greater Ipswich area through inCommunity Inc, we repurpose underutilised spaces to provide safe places for people otherwise sleeping rough through Beddown and provide quality tenant education for people Nationally through Tenancy Skills Institute.

While many things have changed our WHY reflects the original purpose of our organisation. 'We inspire people so that they believe they can'.

The following pages show our first annual report from 1983 and the front cover of an anthology of our history, compiled for the 2002 annual report. Below are some of the highlights from our first 20 years of history.

25 November 1982 - A meeting was called by Mayor Mr Des Freeman to gauge the interest of the community to establish a youth service. Dr Hilda des Arts gave a report on a Lifeline Survey and the need for a youth service in Ipswich. The aims and objectives of the service were : To provide assistance to all youth who are identified as being alienated from the rest of the community. The support may be through practical assistance with accommodation, employment, material aid and/or referrals.

March 1983 - Alf Kalamafoni was appointed the first street worker after Dr Llew Edwards announced that a grant for \$4,500 had been granted and the Federal Government would match it dollar for dollar.

November 1983 - The 113 year-old house at 1 Burnett Street was purchased following a Federal Government grant of \$140,000 for purchase and expenses. Cathy North was employed as the first Shelter Coordinator.

27 April 1984 - The Youth Shelter was officially opened by the Member for Ipswich and Foreign Affairs Minister - Mr Bill Hayden. Roxanne Oliver, who had been one of the shelter's first residents became a youth worker at the service.

1987 - The service rented properties at Booval and Coalfalls to support young people into long term accommodation.

July 1989 - The house at Burnett Street was listed with the National Trust.

August 1991 - Two Blackall Street properties were purchased and the first residents were accepted.

1994 - We adopted a new statement of purpose and service philosophy: "To assist young people who are in crisis, homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless, and their families, to achieve self-reliance and independence."

1995 - Ten units at a cost of \$331,465 were completed at Blackall Street.

1999 - A property was purchased for the new shelter and the sale of Burnett Street was discussed.

30 November 2000 - The build of Lowry Street was completed and officially opened.

2000 - John Haggerty was recognised for his service with the Blackall Street units named 'Haggerty Housing Project'. The Administration Centre was named 'Marshallsea Centre' after committee member Val Marshallsea and the Shelter was named 'Hargreaves House' after committee secretary Robyn Hargreaves.

2005 - One of the big issues emerging in 2005 was housing affordability. Due to the property boom, it was more difficult for young people to access affordable rentals.

2007 - The service mourned the loss of Val Marshallsea, our chairperson and founding member of Ipswich Independent Youth Service.

2008 - A project was started to convert the garage of our Lowry St property into a training room, to be known as the 'Val Marshallsea Learning Centre'.

2009 - We opened the doors on a second youth shelter, which was funded to provide accommodation and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young men.

2010 - A decision was made for the organisation to discontinue providing long term housing due to the ongoing viability issues, this lead to the proposed sale of the Blackall St Property

2011 - The year started with one of the biggest floods our region had experienced. This meant that our shelters had to be evacuated temporarily. Following the floods we saw a significant increase in people accessing our services who were displaced by the floods.

2012 - The Lewis St Shelter was officially renamed 'Kippa Umphie', a name given to us by Uncle Ross Anderson, Ugarapul Traditional Owner.

2013 - Ipswich Independent Youth Service was a finalist in the Local Favourites Awards.

2015 - In Partnership with Kummara Association (Lead Agency), DVAC & Mercy Community Services we commenced delivery of the Ipswich Family and Child Connect Service.

2014 - We restructured the service, consolidating to one shelter and starting a Youth Mobile Support program as well as the SPin program.

2015 - We started the Sierra Leone Project to raise funds to support the Sonjor Community School in Sierra Leone.

2017 - We established the Tenancy Skills Institute, delivering Australia's first tenant education that is recognised by the Real Estate Industry. The team developed our WHY "We inspire people to believe that they can". We updated our constitution, policies, procedures and strategic plan. Our parent organisation was renamed inCommunity. The properties at Blackall Street were prepared for sale.

2018 - Tenancy Skills Institute courses were trialled in three locations in preparation for a Statewide rollout funded by the Queensland Government Department of Housing and Public Works. A strategic marketing, digital and partnerships program commenced. Sector development work commenced with the Local Level Alliance in Ipswich, Lockyer Valley, Sommerset and the Scenic Rim.

2019 - Our rollout of Tenancy Skills Institute to 20 regions across Queensland. We gained support from The Real Estate Institute of Queensland for the program. We started to deliver services in Youth Justice through the South West Bail Support Service.

2020 - The year started out like the previous one, and lots of things were happening across our programs. Then COVID hit and changed our world. We had to adjust all of our programs to the 'new way of working'. Our inCommunity Connect team commenced services for adults and families impacted by homelessness.

2020 - We established Tenancy Skills Institute sites outside of Queensland, with Early Launch sites in New South Wales and Victoria.

2021 - During the year programs started to return to normal as we all started to learn how to live with COVID in the community. Demand on our services increased significantly, with an increase in clients of 650% compared to two years ago.

2022 - Tenancy Skills Institute commenced delivery in the ACT. inCommunity acquired Beddown.





ANNUAL REPORT  
OF  
IPSWICH INDEPENDENT YOUTH SERVICE INCORPORATED

27th OCTOBER, 1983

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Ipswich Independent Youth Service was formed with the charter of applying some imaginative new responses to meeting the needs of young people. It has been exciting for those of us associated with the service to address this task. We present this report of our first eleven months work, conscious of the importance of highlighting the issues which we will face in the close future.

Our progress to date is documented at the beginning of this report. As you can imagine, it was very encouraging for us to become included in the Youth Services Scheme within 5 months of our formation. When Alf Kalamafoni became employed as our first detached Youth Worker, we felt we were "on the way". Those of you who know Alf (and I imagine that most of you do) will agree with me that he has really put his heart into the work and become a friend to many young people who lacked an adequate relationship to any adult person. The Youth Worker's position is a difficult one to define and it has not been easy for either Alf or the Committee, as we have grappled with the issues which arise from the style of work chosen. We do not claim that we have yet found the best way of reaching the young people we wish to, but we are certainly committed to continuing along similar lines to those we have established.

The need for emergency accommodation was well recognised before the service was formed. At a meeting in January 1983, the Kambu Aboriginal Progress Association placed the results of their research and Government applications including a grant from Department of Children's Services before the Youth Service, encouraging us to proceed with the task already commenced by them. Throughout the year, we have investigated possible locations and are now able to report that we have entered into a contract to purchase a property at No. 1 Burnett Street, Ipswich, which is suitable to accommodate up to 10 young people. Funding has been approved under the Homeless Persons Assistance Programme, which provides for Capital Expenditure up to \$140,000 and salary subsidies for staff. An application for town planning approval is to be considered within the next few days which we hope will make it possible to finalise the contract to buy this property by the end of November.

It is necessary to point out that while we have been successful in obtaining a capital grant and salary subsidies, we will have to raise funds for the running costs of the shelter from within our local community. Much preparatory work has been done towards finding an appropriate way to organise the shelter but a major task lies ahead to put the project into operation. The amount of work ahead of us must not be underestimated.

To date, a relatively small team of people have been involved in the establishment of Ipswich Independent Youth Service. There is a need to involve a much greater number of people who will contribute in various capacities. It is also important that a close liaison be maintained with other groups serving the same population.

The Youth Service has been formed for the benefit of Ipswich young people. It must constantly keep in tune to changing needs and be flexible enough to make adjustments in its projects where necessary. I am grateful to everyone who has contributed towards getting our service to the point it is now at. Your continuing interest along with those who will join us now will help to ensure that goals which we have established can be reached.

ROB HANDYSIDE.

### YOUTH WORKER'S REPORT

During the first six months of my work as the Ipswich Youth Worker, I made approximately 828 contacts with young people on the road or from families facing a problem of some kind. The age ranged from 12 - 18 years old although some are older. During this time, we did help to find accommodation, arranged jobs and referred them to other organisations, solicitors, police, etc.

We managed to help a lot of them to go back home to their own families. (We are still in contact). 85% of these young people come from broken homes. We made contact with an average of 30 young people a week in which we picked up 3 - 5 new young people a week mainly looking for accommodation or in trouble with the law or at home.

When I first started, the problem areas were Riverview, Goodna and Leichardt or, amazingly, young people and families who had lived in these areas and moved out to other suburbs. They found it hard to be accepted or to fit into new suburbs. I now find young people drifting onto the road, not only from these areas but from every corner of Ipswich. There are also young people drifting into Ipswich from other parts of Queensland and other states.

During this time, I have tried to work and build a relationship with other organisations such as:- Life Line, Children's Services, Probation Department, Police, Child Guidance, Family Planning, Kambu, Pregnancy Help, Goodna Neighbourhood Centre, Community Health, St. Vincent de Paul, C.E.S., Social Security, Hannah House, solicitors and different churches. I also visit Bogga Road and Woodford prisons weekly to see the young people from Ipswich who are there. I found that there's a real need for this, especially with young people who have no family or visitors.

The problem of homelessness has taken up most of my time in the last six months. I feel very sad to say that just about every week of this last six months, I have been approached by a young girl or boy to help them find accommodation. They have either been kicked out of home, run away or been sleeping around at a friend's place, parks, at the river, underneath the bridge, in their cars or public toilets. There are many homeless young people in Ipswich and it will get worse in the years to come.

My first goal was to build a relationship with the young people on the road and try to explore their world, where they hang out, their downfall, why are they on the road, what they want and expect of us and most importantly what is missing in their lives and what we can do as a society as a whole to help restore their identity.

I also had the opportunity to learn how other organisations operate and also could help these young people. I feel that I have achieved that goal to a certain extent. I have learned that these young people need as much help as their parents. Places like Riverview are crying out for a recreation centre, not only for young people but parents too. Young people are complaining about no entertainment or coffee shop after 10 p.m. around town, no emergency accommodation and the lack of job opportunities in Ipswich.

I know that I only play a minor role in the Youth Service set up so I'll take this opportunity to thank my Committee for putting up with and also believing in me, every organisation, especially "Life Line" for the support and back up, Dale & Fallu for the legal advice, all the families that open their houses for us, my friends and volunteers for their time and effort and all others who helped us in different ways. I would like to give special thanks to the young people of Ipswich for accepting me into their world.

I pray and hope that the next six months will be as successful.



Treasurer's Report

Expenses have been kept to a minimum because use has been made of Life Line facilities including secretarial assistance, telephone and office space.

Government funding was authorised from early February but a delay in notification of funding and employment of the Youth Worker has meant that some money was accumulated at an early stage which is now expected to meet a deficit in the 1983/84 financial year.

A generous donation from North Ipswich Rotary was the first indication of Community support. With the project being extended to include shelter accommodation, it will be very important to initiate a community fund-raising effort.

MARY-ELLEN BIRBECK.

IPSWICH INDEPENDENT YOUTH SERVICESTATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FROM 1ST APRIL 1983 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1983RECEIPTS

Youth Services Support Scheme Grant	13,500.00
Donations	1,106.00

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14,606.00

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\$14,606.00

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PAYMENTS

Wages	6,999.98
Workers Compensation	14.31
Travel/Petrol/Allowances	563.92
Administration/Rent	1,290.00
Material Aid	430.00
Printing/Stationery	112.95
Postage	29.96
Provisions	23.32
Electric Jug/Coffee Mugs	29.12

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9,493.56

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CR. Balance 30.9.83 5,112.44

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\$14,606.00

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BANK BALANCE 30.9.83 \$5,112.44

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT 1ST APRIL 1983 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 1983INCOME

Youth Service Support Scheme Grant	13,500.00	
Donation	1,106.00	14,606.00

EXPENDITURE

Wages	6,999.98	
Travel/Petrol Allowances	563.92	
Workers Compensation	14.31	
Administration/Rent	1,290.00	
Material Aid	430.00	
Printing/Stationery	207.51	
Postage	29.96	
Provisions	23.32	
Electric Jug/Coffee Mugs	29.12	
Radio Pager and Rental	217.25	9,805.37

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SURPLUS \$4,800.63

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BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 1983

Accumulated Funds:- Surplus to 30.9.83 \$4,800.63

These Funds are represented by:-

Bank	5,112.44	
Less:		
Accrued Expenses	311.81	\$4,800.63

# inCommunity Connect

Nerissa Wade

During the 2021- 2022 financial year the inCommunity Connect team continued to 'inspire people so that they believe they can'. COVID19 restrictions, lock downs and social distancing continued and in addition devastating flooding in Ipswich and surrounds led to significant demand on the housing and homelessness sector.

The Connect team are adaptable, reliable and deliver services to some of the most vulnerable people in the community. I would like to acknowledge the wonderful efforts of our team of 'superstars'. Their commitment and dedication to providing strengths based, client centred support is reflected in feedback we have shared in this report. It's been a big year for the team, and their efforts, and dedication are appreciated by not only the organisation, but also the community.



## ACROSS INCOMMUNITY CONNECT

**158**  
QHIP referrals  
sent and received



**Over  
7,785**  
contacts made  
(not including non-clients)



IHSP- Mobile Support Adults /  
Families & CAP

**91%**

of clients who had a support  
period closed 1/2 or more of  
case management goals have  
been met

**958 HRS** of NON-Client/non-  
funded support hrs  
(including phone support; information  
and QHIP assessments/ referrals)

**514<sup>+</sup>** Number of enquires /  
referrals (people seeking  
housing assistance)

IHSP – Mobile Support Adults/  
Families and CAP

**89%**

of support periods ended with  
the client housed in secure and  
sustainable housing



## Crisis Accommodation Hargreaves House Crisis Shelter

**43** stays provided to young people

**80%**

clients who had a support period closed 1/2 or more of case management goals have been met

**70%**

of support periods ended with the client housed in secure and sustainable housing

The crisis accommodation shelter works with young people 16-21 years old to provide them with accommodation while they work towards achieving their goals in a safe and supportive environment. The team of Case Managers work with young people with the aim of moving them out of homelessness and equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to sustain safe housing and live autonomously in their community. Young people are provided with stable accommodation, food, material needs and tailored support to increase independent living skills and build their capacity to maintain housing. The program builds upon the strengths of residents, supporting them to access other supports to improve their mental health, wellbeing, and connections within the community. Many young people from the shelter this financial year exited into transitional housing programs, including SPin, community housing, student accommodation, private rentals, and returning to family.



This is what some of our clients have said about this service

.....

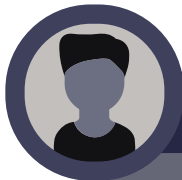
“You helped me to be more organised. I learnt many things here like cooking skills, cleaning skills, language, daily routines and living/sharing with others. I’m not as stressed. I’m now living in a sharehouse and I’m more relaxed and independent.”

.....

“One of the youth workers wrote a poem for me for my birthday. Nobody has ever done anything like that for me”

.....

“inCommunity has helped me by encouraging me to follow through with set goals. The program has helped me with addiction. I don’t smoke as much and don’t have to everyday”



### Jim’s story

When Jim\* first got in contact with inCommunity Connect he was 17, homeless, drifting between sleeping in the park, and couch surfing.

Jim shared “I had nowhere to go and was spending my time drinking and smoking”.

He was also experiencing depression and anxiety, but he was not accessing any mental health support. Jim referred himself to inCommunity Crisis Accommodation shelter in Ipswich, and was accepted into the program.

Jim was in the program at Hargreaves House for over four months. He also explained that the program helped him with addiction. “I don’t smoke as much and don’t have to do it every day,” Jim said.

Jim was supported by our team to engage in looking for other long term housing options. He completed a social housing application and was referred to our SPin Share Housing program. Jim has identified that whilst he would like to live on his own, share housing

is more of an affordable option for him at the moment.

During this time Jim shared that the program helped him to “follow through with set goals”.

In addition to his housing goals, Jim was proud to also achieve a number of other great outcomes. These include:

- Regularly linking in with his job network provider
- Referred to, and engaged in mental health support
- Gained identification
- Commenced an apprenticeship in Hospitality
- Developed his independent living skills and skills in living in a shared environment

Since engaging in support with inCommunity, Jim was pleased to report that his “life is organised” and he is feeling supported to “feel safe and independent”.

\*\* Name has been changed



A day in the life of program with property managers visiting the youth shelter

## Crisis Accommodation Program

The Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) provides short term, supported accommodation to adults and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The aim of this program is to provide these families with a safe place, support and assistance to transition into longer term accommodation. This financial year we supported 17 families by providing them supported accommodation.

**2687** bed nights provided to families



**429** hours case management support

## SPin Share Housing

SPin (Supporting People in) Housing Program is delivered in partnership with the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy and Churches of Christ Housing Services. The SPin program provides young people aged 16-25 years with accommodation and case management to build their independent living skills and build a good tenancy history.

**16** Young people housed across three SPin Properties





This is what some of our clients have said about this service

“Prior to receiving support from inCommunity I was feeling hopeless and lonely. The feeling of drowning in debt and emotions. I needed help with housing, but I had no-one to discuss things with.”

“The fact that I can contact my case manager and she always makes contact with me means a lot. The support offered has been appreciated. It gives me hope and the strength to keep going.”

“I feel so much lighter, like I’m getting closer to the light at the end of the tunnel. I feel I can communicate with my case manager and be supported, no matter what I’m opening up about. I feel I have someone to lean on.”

“When I first met with my case manager, she was friendly and understanding. She helped me be more organised and keep track of my housing goals and applications. She supported me through the child safety process. It meant a lot to have someone there for support who was not judgemental.”

## Mobile Support

The mobile support program assists young people, adults and families who are experiencing, or at risk of homelessness to obtain housing, or sustain their current accommodation. Case Managers work directly with clients to navigate through their individualised housing needs, addressing any barriers they may have with the ultimate goal of having safe and sustainable accommodation. This year there has been an overwhelming demand, which has made it extremely difficult for people to secure accommodation due to the ongoing lack of housing available in the private rental market, and social housing. It has been identified that adults and families are the key target group that require our mobile support services. This need has been consistent and a trend that is being seen across the sector. The case management team continues to utilise their broad and extensive knowledge and skills, in collaboration with key stakeholders to obtain positive housing outcomes.



60

young people were supported through mobile support



45%

of young people identified as Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander



48

adults and families supported



33%

of families identified as Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander



## Aimee's Story

Aimee\* and her two children were living in an unsafe environment and facing homelessness. Due to that environment, the Department of Child Safety became involved.

Aimee said: "I reached out to inCommunity because we were about to become homeless and I didn't know what to do."

Aimee remembers when she first met with her case manager that she was friendly and understanding.

"She helped me be more organised and keep track of my housing goals and application. Her support made me feel good. It meant a lot to have someone there to support me who was not judgemental," Aimee shared.

With the support of inCommunity, Aimee prioritised her housing needs and the team helped her to complete the Tenancy Skills Institute course.

She shares: "This helped me with my applications and I learnt how to be a great tenant. I am now optimistic that I can maintain a rental property and provide a stable home for my children."

Aimee wants people in the community to have a better understanding of homelessness. "It is extremely hard to get a house. Homelessness affects a lot of people and a lot of families. Do not judge people who are homeless as you don't know what they've been through."

When asked her message to others in a similar situation Aimee shared: "Don't give up, keep going and trying. I understand it is hard. Just keep doing the best you can. Try to see the light at the end of the tunnel. It is there somewhere and you will find it eventually."

\*Name has been changed





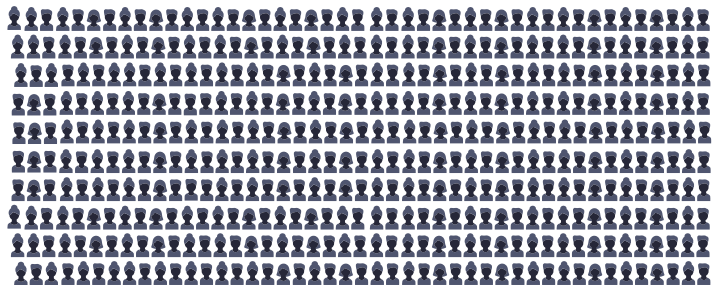
# Outreach

The outreach team has been very active in the community providing assertive outreach and regularly attending community events and barbecues. The team responds to people who are sleeping rough, and accepts referrals from the Ipswich Housing Service Centre and the Ipswich City Council. They provide rough sleepers and people who are at risk of sleeping rough with information, referrals and access to essential items such as food and toiletries.

The outreach team focuses on building genuine, positive and purposeful relationships with people. Due to the lack of affordable housing options for people who are sleeping rough, it is often about making people's situation a little more comfortable, while supporting them to address their barriers and work towards finding suitable accommodation. The team also provided a response in the Ipswich Evacuation Centre during the floods in March 2022. This response included support, emergency relief, information and referral.

# 957

people connected with  
the outreach team



## Dignity Food Relief

Dignity Food Relief is an amazing program delivered in partnership with Dignity and Youfoodz. Over the 2021-2022 financial year the team have given out over 3,600 **Youfoodz meals**. Dignity's Food Relief program assists people in need within the community, easing the financial burden of putting food on the table. We are able to provide easy access to delicious meals that are available free of charge.

**"Thank you so much for the food today. My family and I appreciate it so much. You do such a good job thank you very much"**







# WOMEN'S CLUB



This is what three of our Women's Club members had to say:

"Beautiful people, always feel welcome"

"Thank you ladies for your support"

"Hi, I just wanted to share the good news that I can move into my new accommodation. I am so grateful. Thank you for welcoming me this morning".

During the financial year we had over 665 visitors attend 'The Club' for a range of services including; coffee and catch up, practical and emotional support, information and referral, and support to access free essential items eg. toiletries, food etc.

Some of the programs that were delivered at 'The Club' throughout the year included:

- Mother's Day Morning tea
- Christmas and Easter lunch and celebration
- OzHarvest NEST Program
- Visit from Leeanne Enoch (Minister for Communities & Housing, Digital Economy and the Arts) and Jennifer Howard (Local Member for Ipswich)
- International Women's Day
- Book Club and Book Fair
- Knit and Natter
- Guinea Pig Therapy 'Therapigs'

Over 665 women attended Women's Club

95%

accessed food & drink

48%

engaged in programs

40%

seeking homelessness support, information / referral



## Bail Support

The SWAP (South West Advocacy and Pathways) continued up until December 2021. This program was delivered in partnership with Inala Wangarra, Youth Advocacy Centre and Inspire Youth and Family Service. The SWAP program focused on supporting young people who were at risk of remand to assist them to comply with their bail conditions. Whilst this program was extremely positive for young people involved in the Youth Justice system, inCommunity made the decision to step away from the partnership and no longer continue the SWAP program. This decision was one not taken lightly, but it was important for us as an organisation to focus on our core business of housing and homelessness.

## Ipswich Region Local Level Alliance

This report is an overview of the progress and achievements of the Ipswich Region Local Level Alliance for 2021/2022. inCommunity has successfully continued delivering the Ipswich Region Local Level Alliance in partnership with Kummara Association.

The Ipswich Region Local Level Alliance has continued to work closely with local Government and Non-Government Services to build stronger connections and partnerships across sectors. The main purpose of these connections are to provide a more fluid response in supporting local families and making sure they receive the right services at the right time.

LLA achievements over the past 12 months included:

- Continued growing the LLA membership base of over 330, including new services from various sectors.
- Establishment of the Ipswich and West Moreton Community Central Portal (Groupsites) with close to 800 members.
- Monthly meetings of the Regional Child, Youth and Families Committee.
- School holiday information collated and sent to the community sector
- The Community Information Updates continued

providing valuable information to local agencies and all schools across the region, which supports local programs, events, professional development and funding opportunities. The Community Information Update is distributed to over 900 subscribers.

- Monthly LLA meetings facilitated by the LLA coordinator to prioritise issues and service gaps for the continued collaboration across the sector.
- Supported a local community organisation to run wellbeing workshops for those from the community sector for Mental Health Week.

The 2021/2022 events and other working groups included:

- Ipswich Mental Health Week Event Planning Committee: Ipswich residents have access to free information on programs and services in a safe and relaxed environment during Queensland Mental Health Week, at the 2021 Ipswich Mental Health and Wellbeing Expo
- Chaired the Emergency Relief Network and the Housing and Homelessness network meetings.
- Supported the youth services to coordinate and run





the Youth week events.

- Connect 4 Children Strategy, Department of Education: Supporting various school communities to develop local solutions for local priorities to help give all children a great start.
- T2S External reference group: The LLA coordinator regularly attended and participated with the Ipswich Youth Justice reference group to support the T2S program and link services to those families of young people involved with the program.
- Ipswich Family Support Services Working Group: This working group is a permanent group of the LLA. The group consists of local family support services who work within a case management approach.
- Emergency Relief Information Document: This resource has been established and kept current to reflect those providing some sort of Emergency Relief support in the region.
- Strengthening Services Project: The LLA collaborated with Ipswich City Council, the purpose of the Strengthening Services Project is to initiate conversations with the Community Service

Sector, to develop an understanding of priorities and needs that reflects current social impacts and service needs, across the whole community.

- Somerset Youth Mental Health Social Infrastructure Development Group: Involved in this group alongside other stakeholders and run by Somerset Regional Council, this group was focused on improving future localised mental health services and programs supporting young people in the region.
- Regular attendance at the following meetings: Murri Interagency; Brisbane Valley Interagency; Fassifern Interagency; Ipswich-West Moreton Youth Interagency; Lockyer Valley Youth Network; Building a Child and Youth Friendly Ripley Valley group; Greater Springfield Regional Connect; Mental Health Week Planning team; West Moreton Mental Health Collaborative; Ipswich Housing & Homelessness Network; Disability interagency Network and AOD network.
- The LLA Coordinator also led and participated in the; Emergency Relief Network, the Multicultural Health Network and the Ipswich Domestic Family Violence Action Plan group.



Alcon in action donate sleeping outside kits



Woodcrest State College



Books donated by Fantastic Furniture



Winston Glades Early Education Centre



Mountain of Christmas gifts from Youfoodz staff



Gifts and food hampers from Youfoodz team

# Business and School Donations



Gifts for children at Ipswich Hospital



Sarah our volunteer organising the donations room



Insane Technologies via Dignity Feets & Seats drive





## Joining inCommunity

Beddown officially joined inCommunity in May 2022 bringing more value-added services to guests with the wealth of experience and programs within inCommunity.

Beddown believes everyone deserves a bed to sleep in. Through Beddown, we now provide innovative solutions to address this issue by providing pop-up accommodation and key support services in under-utilised spaces.

Beddown continues to operate, under the ongoing guidance of founder and Australian of the Year Finalist Norm McGillivray.

Joining inCommunity further bolsters the foundations of Beddown with an amazing organisation that has been doing incredible work for nearly 40 years. It is an exciting time for the future of Beddown.

BEDDOWN



## Backpacker Venue

Beddown has been working closely with a backpacker venue in Brisbane City since the end of our 2021 trial within a CBD car park. Collaboration is embedded within Beddown and working with key services and organisations to bring value added services to the 80 vulnerable guests who are now staying there. It is important to recognise the amazing work of our collaborators.

- Supported accommodation of over 200 nights - Beddown
- Food support – Community Canteen
- Legal Clinic – Optimum Legal Solutions
- Vaccinations (FLU / COVID) – The Vacseen Project
- Addiction support – Drug ARM
- Medical Clinic – The Vacseen Project
- Supported Care – Sandpiper Care
- PwC – Familiar Faces – Food and Recruitment readiness

Commenced in 2022-2023 financial year

- HEP C Testing and Treatment – Kombi Klinik
- Mental Health Support – The Vacseen Project
- Employment solutions – BUSY Ability



### After the Mud – Flood Recovery Program

With fundraising support from the Real Estate Institute Queensland, Beddown and inCommunity facilitated \$35,000 of funding to be distributed to those impacted by flooding across Southeast Queensland and Central Queensland. We worked primarily with Neighbourhood and Community Centres to identify people who were in need. Most payments were used to fund temporary accommodation and material support for people who had lost everything in the flood.

Luck Choumanivong from Goodna Neighbourhood House has assisted a number of people to apply for the After the Mud grants. “The money from the grant helps people pay for temporary accommodation. Money has been tight for a number of people who have applied for grants. The flood clean-up and need to move has meant it has taken time to return to work. The grants help reduce the stress of not knowing where the money will come from for rent. One of the ladies is a single mother with two children. Another can now contribute to rent while staying with family.”

### Fundraising Highlights

Beddown receives no government funding and is dependent on community fundraising and donations to operate. Thank you to the many community service organisations, schools, businesses and generous individuals who have fundraised or donated to enable us to offer pop-up accommodation, support and health interventions for people impacted by homelessness.



Our first ever Art Exhibition and Auction featuring the works of Keith Blake – Canvases for Comfort raised nearly \$12,000



Our friends at InXpress Australia and New Zealand held a Gala Dinner Fundraising event for their Franchisees and raised just over \$28,000







# Tenancy Skills Institute QUEENSLAND

The Tenancy Skills Institute continued providing quality tenant education for tenants and future tenants across Queensland. Despite the further restrictions we all experienced at the beginning of 2022 due to COVID and flooding, we continued to maintain a presence in each housing region.

Once we were able to travel, we again strengthened our presence, delivering classroom courses in local communities, and engaging with communities to build and strengthen relationships and awareness of our education options. During the times when we were not able to travel or present classroom courses, we offered regular Online Classroom courses, and the team attended 'virtual' networks across the regions to ensure our tenant education options were known within local communities.

Despite lower attendance when classes re-commenced, we have seen an increase in attendance as we strengthen our footprint, leading to increased local community awareness.

## How 40 years at inCommunity informed Tenancy Skills Institute

inCommunity has supported people in the Ipswich and surrounding communities since 1982. Over the years we learnt that there needed to be better options for the people we supported, who as young people, were vulnerable in the rental market. We learnt that by partnering with the real estate industry and providing education that achieved improved tenancies was the way forward.

At inCommunity, we have been on a continual learning journey for many years. As we sought better solutions for young people and families experiencing homelessness, we learnt the importance of developing positive and mutually beneficial industry relationships to improve the outcomes for existing tenants. We have learnt that by reaching out and partnering with industry, the positive 'unintended' benefits are far reaching.

## What we have achieved in the past 12 months

**3,021** Students trained  
2,292 full, 729 short course

**205** Real Estate Industry  
supporters across QLD



# TENANCY SKILLS INSTITUTE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Tenancy Skills Institute began with the purpose to create positive and purposeful relationships that lead to better housing outcomes for all people and parties involved. From the beginning we sought to involve community support services. Initially we looked at community organisations delivering our training in their local area. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing homelessness and housing issues we experienced in Queensland, many of those services were stretched and needed to focus on supporting their clients through the pandemic. Despite this change in the program format, we have continued to connect and build relationships with community partners.

We have designed a new program and role for local community support services to assist/support community members to complete the self-paced online course. The Mentor program will provide a supported option for local community workers to support and assist students to complete our online tenant education options, which will include training and resources for Mentors.

# REAL ESTATE ENGAGEMENT

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Engagement with the Real Estate Industry and strengthening relationships with our current supporters has been a priority for the year. This has involved more time offered within individual offices to discuss how Property Managers can direct more of their current tenants to the course, providing more support in linking current tenants in need to local support services, obtaining feedback on the industry changes and how to incorporate that in our course.

We have seen an increase in Real Estate Agencies adding the Tenancy Skills Institute Logo and/or information to their websites or application forms and a dramatic increase in Real Estate Agencies sharing our information on their social media channels. 34 Property Managers have taken time out of their businesses to talk to students in our classes this financial year. The most common question from students being the application processes, it was incredibly helpful to have direct insight on how this process was completed within varying offices.

Tenancy Skills Institute have attended several events and workshops to support and better engage with the real estate industry. This included:

- Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) Zone events
- PPM Conference
- Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) stakeholder workshops and roadshows
- Elite Agent interview
- REIQ woman in real estate
- AHURI event supported by Industry Leaders
- RTA Webinar

The REIQ Zone events, held over 12 regions, were the perfect opportunity to hear from Industry Leaders and to build on our current Agency relationships in each region. Understanding the challenges and positive outcomes experienced within the industry help our education accurately reflect the needs of Property Managers and to remain current.

The RTA recently held Property Management and Landlord General Tenancy Information Sessions over two locations on the Gold Coast, Hervey Bay and also in Bundaberg. Tenancy Skills Institute were invited to attend and connect with the local Property Managers and Landlords. The sessions had a great response with the RTA covering really crucial topics such as the new rental reforms to begin the 1st October.

The 2nd Mackay Long lunch was held 19th Oct 2021 with a great attendance. Hosted again by Paul Tommasini, Lisa Farrelly and Peter Brewer, REIQ chairman of the board, the event was run as a workshop to help connect Property Managers and local Housing Services. Property Managers were able to apply common scenarios they witnessed that impact a person's ability to sustain their tenancy and where to direct them for assistance and support. Following from the lunch, several connections and referrals were made to help sustain tenancies, one example was a gentlemen who could no longer maintain his large house and yard, rather than submitting the usual required breach notice, the property manager was able to connect the tenant to CASA and successfully arrange disability supports for the required house maintenance.



# REAL ESTATE ENGAGEMENT







## SCHOOL LEAVERS

### Investing in the Future of Renting

The Tenancy Skills Institute continued to invest in young lives to help improve rental outcomes for young future and first time renters. We know that if more young people can successfully manage their first tenancy, we will see positive changes in the private rental market and housing system as a whole. We continued to focus on providing quality tenant education and information for school leavers, knowing that many will enter into their first tenancy in the near future.

We have been able to deliver the Skillsets for Successful Tenancies course to 381 students across 8 schools, of which, 353 students graduated. We also delivered an Introduction to Renting in Queensland short course to approximately 400 senior students across 3 schools. The development of the short course is to provide an option for the many schools that struggle to incorporate a 10 hour course within their senior secondary timetable.

We appreciate the flexibility schools have provided to ensure this important education is accessed by school leavers.

Thank you to the schools who have supported the program: Mirani State High School (Mackay), Lockyer Valley State High School, Columba Catholic College (Charters Towers), Loganlea State High School, Toowoomba Flexi-school, Wilsonton State High School, Lockyer District SHS, Victoria Point YMCA Flexi School.

**"Our Year 12 students were lucky enough to have a presentation from Tenancy Skills Institute. During this session they covered information regarding renting a property, communicating with a landlord and other tenants, cleaning and maintaining a tenancy and budgeting. They learnt some handy tips and tricks if they are looking to move out once they finish year 12."**

Centenary State High School



## First Nations Work and North Queensland Office

In July, we employed a First Nations person in North Queensland, as our Training and Community Engagement Officer. We also opened an office at 129a Lake Street, Cairns.

There has been quality engagement with local First Nations organisations in Far North Queensland, which includes the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Unit (Brisbane, Cairns, and Torres Strait Islands); State Libraries who manage the Indigenous Knowledge Centres; Yarrabah Aboriginal Community; Mossman community and Mareeba community.

After a very positive and productive meeting with Yarrabah Housing Team and Council, we were invited to facilitate the first Skillsets for Successful Tenancies course. This was a great outcome, and we will continue to work with Yarrabah Council to develop resources

that will provide education and benefits in two areas:

- Providing tenant education relevant for people looking to leave community and rent a property.
- Collaborating with the council and housing team to develop resources and education about living and renting within the community.

We aim to work with each community and provide specific resources and assistance to each community. This will be achieved through quality engagement and relationship development.

In addition to public courses at Yarrabah, Mareeba and Mossman, we have also delivered courses at Townsville Aboriginal and Islanders Health Services and AFL Cape York Girls House.

## Andrew's Story

After becoming homeless after a relationship breakdown over 4 years ago, Andrew said that life seemed hopeless.

"I was sleeping in a tent and things became hard and I just didn't care anymore," he said.

Andrew's life took a turn for the better when he met staff from the Bayside Housing Service Centre during the COVID-19 lockdown in August 2021.

"The staff are amazing and helped me into motel accommodation so I could move out of the tent and that made a big difference to me," he said.

From there, Bayside Housing Service Centre staff helped Andrew into the Skillsets for Successful Tenancies – Dollars and Sense course, which teaches people tenancy skills to build their knowledge and confidence to sustain a tenancy in the private rental market.

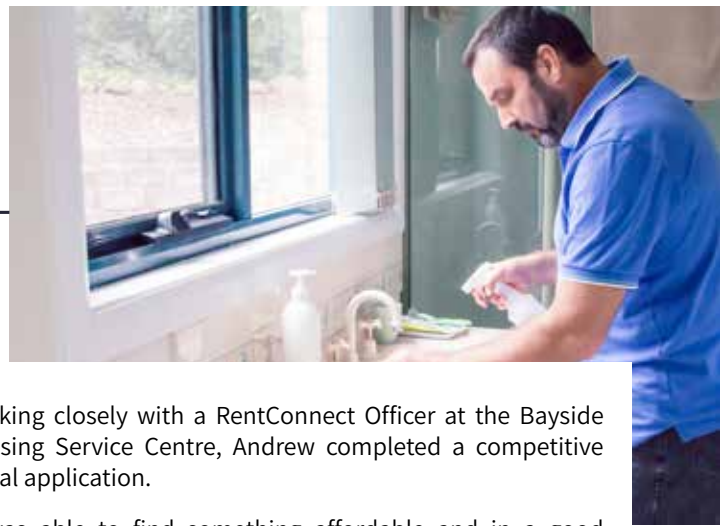
"The course was really good because it's practical information that helps you be a good tenant," Andrew said.

"The best thing was the cleaning plan – it breaks tasks down and shows you how to tackle it.

"You don't let the cleaning build up because when you do, it's impossible."

Andrew said the course was practical because you needed to show evidence of your work.

"As part of the course, I needed to take before and after photos of the cleaning work to show that I could do it," he said.



Working closely with a RentConnect Officer at the Bayside Housing Service Centre, Andrew completed a competitive rental application.

"I was able to find something affordable and in a good location, I'm really happy with my new home," he said.

"It's a good feeling to know that you have somewhere secure to go."

Andrew was supported with a Bond Loan, Rental Grant and a Rental Security Subsidy to establish his home in the rental property.

"I'm so grateful for all the help I've received from staff at Bayside Housing Service Centre.

"The RentConnect Officer went above and beyond to help me. She would ring me up to make sure I was on track.

"I got a leg up, not a handout. I learnt how to do things myself and that's the best thing," he said.

Andrew now has a more positive outlook on life.

"I feel like this has set me up for the future," he said.

"Before I didn't have a rental history, but I now have a tenancy and I'm looking after the place and keeping it clean, and I'll get a good rental history.

"Things are definitely looking up."

Article Courtesy of Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy.

Bana and his partner had been struggling to be approved for a rental for some time. He was discussing his situation at Mission Australia men's group and a team member recommended the Tenancy Skills course to him.

Bana didn't know whether it would help him get a house, but thought he had nothing to lose and signed up.

Shortly after completing the Cairns Tenancy Skills training in May, Bana secured a private rental property with his partner.

Bana shared: "The Real Estate were very impressed that I completed the Tenancy Skills training and they took this into consideration when assessing my application."

Bana wears the keys to his new rental with pride around his neck and shares with everyone what he learnt in the Tenancy Skills course and how it helped.

"It's not just the certificate that has helped, but also all of the things I have learned about being a tenant. I understand my rights and responsibilities and learnt how to communicate professionally with the Property Manager," Bana said.

## Bana's story



# TENANCY SKILLS INSTITUTE – NATIONAL

We have continued to deliver training outside of Queensland, in Northern Sydney and also the Central Highlands region in Victoria. Much of the year was impacted by ongoing COVID lockdowns and weather events which impacted on the continuity of service delivery. We took advantage of every opportunity to deliver training in these regions.

We explored opportunities to continue expanding the reach of the Tenancy Skills Institute, including initial scoping work for potential opportunities in Northern New South Wales, across Victoria, South Australia and in the ACT. We were engaged by Barnardos Australia to develop a training program for young people in their Youth Foyer. This training will be delivered throughout the 2022-2023 Financial Year.

To mark National Homelessness week in 2022, the Tenancy Skills Institute made our Introduction to Renting online course free to all Australians for one month (August 2022).

Ben recently graduated from our Tenancy Skills course in Ballarat and is set for success as a renter. Our Ballarat course is delivered in conjunction with the fantastic team from Uniting Vic Tas.

Ben is currently a participant in a Uniting Vic Tas Youth Mental Health Recovery Program in Ballarat. The Program offers up to 12 months of support to assist young people in their recovery. Part of the program is accommodation.

It is an expectation that all participants care for the units like it were their own private rental. They have weekly unit inspections, and the participants are all expected to present their units in a clean and tidy manner.

Ben has been a participant in the program for the past three months. This is Ben's first time living away from home and his first time being responsible for his own housing. From the start, Ben was struggling with the day-to-day responsibilities of taking care of his own home. Ben would present his unit every week for the inspection to the best of his ability, but always fell short.

The team worked with Ben around cleanliness and how to achieve basic housekeeping tasks, but Ben was still not able to reach a level of cleanliness that was acceptable.

## Tenancy Skills Course Making a Difference

Team leader Lisa, then offered Ben the opportunity to attend the two-day Tenancy Skills course that was being held in Ballarat. Ben was keen to attend, so he was swiftly enrolled. Ben attended both days and whilst he remained very quiet in the sessions, it was obvious he was taking in everything that was being presented.

At the completion of the course Ben stated: "I really enjoyed the course and now understand the reasons I need to take care of my home."

"When I get my own private rental, I don't want to lose it, because I now know how difficult the rental market is," Ben shared.

Since completing the Tenancy Skills course, the team have seen a massive improvement in Ben's housekeeping skills. He is now achieving a clean and tidy unit on a daily basis and in fact was this week's winner of the "Best Presented Unit".

Lisa shared: "I am absolutely convinced that attending the Tenancy Skills Training course assisted Ben to understand the importance of keeping a clean and tidy home as well as the reasons why this is important. Ben is still an active participant in the program and continues to kick goals."

## Ben's Story



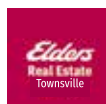
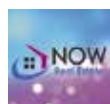
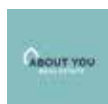
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**"I really enjoyed the course and now understand the reasons I need to take care of my home."**

**Congratulations Ben and thank you for your enthusiasm!**





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